

## **COLLEGE PREP ADVANCED COMPOSITION/TERM SYLLABUS 2019**

OR...the Sanctuary & Challenge for the Mentally Active and Increasingly Articulate Student

**Instructor:** Mr. Jourdan (justin.jourdan@byron.k12.mn.us; extension 1023)

**Grade Level:** 11-12

**Recommendations:** At least a B average in writings done in 10<sup>th</sup> and 11th grade is recommended and a willingness to work hard and improve. \*\*Class of 2016: 90% or higher in American Lit.

\*\*Class of 2017: 80% or higher in Accel. English 11 or 90% or better in English 11.

**Course Content Summary:** This advanced writing class will enhance the student's writing skills needed for college. Grammar, usage, and sentence structure will be stressed in conjunction with good writing. Students will also study the vocabulary (prefixes and suffixes) essential to good writing.

Since there are certain assumptions about the teaching of writing that are supported by the National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE) and research, we will try to follow through on some of them. Here are a few of the assumptions:

- Writing is thinking.
- Reading has a positive impact on developing writing skills.
- Writing can be learned-but only through practice.
- Writing is a recursive process.
- Writing is learned through a trial and error process which involves feedback from other people.
- Writing must have a purpose and audience.

### **Course Requirements/Assignments/Papers:**

- Quizzes & exams will be given at the end of each grammar unit.
- Vocabulary quizzes will be given at the end of each week.
- Writing assignments will be given weekly, to be completed outside of class. We will focus on revision for these assignments. At mid-quarter, students will be assigned a cumulative final paper dealing with a stylistic analysis of their own writing. The stylistics paper will be due at the end of the quarter.
- Late work WILL NOT be accepted.
- Rough drafts will be required for each paper and must be handed in with the final for credit.
- Reflective responses are required with each assignment; they must be kept with all assignments as a reference for goals and growth.

## Honors Credit:

There is an honors option for this course. Per the English Department decision, students must earn an 87% in the course (final grade) to be eligible to complete the honors option assignments.

## Student Expectations:

- Let me know how I can help you be successful, and don't be afraid to ask (politely ☺) for help at any time. I'll never put you down for asking. Have faith in your own ideas and express your individuality through your writing.
- Plan your schedule for both short-term and long-range projects. Establish habits that are conducive to learning independently and with others. Take charge of your own learning.
- Treat all people and ideas with respect by giving and receiving constructive feedback.
- Tweak your note taking skills. College classes are 80-90% note taking, so learn now.
- Understand that there is a homework expectation every day, whether it is an explicit task to be completed by the next meeting, or whether it is an implied task of reviewing material in preparation for the next meeting's demands.
- Restroom/locker passes are located on the file cabinet in the back of the room. Use your discretion please. Misuse will result in fewer freedoms regarding these passes.
- **Cheating and plagiarism will result in a zero on that particular assignment/assessment. All work should be your own.**
- **Stylistics paper must be completed to pass the class.**
- **Late work WILL NOT be accepted.**
- Rough drafts will be required for each paper and must be handed in with the final for credit.
- Reflective cover letters are required with each assignment; they must be kept with all assignments as a reference for goals and growth.

**Text:** *Warriner's English Grammar and Composition*—Complete Course

## Suggested Materials:

- 3-ring binder with loose leaf paper divided into the following sections:  
Vocabulary; Grammar; Writing assignments; Rhetorical structures
- Folder for portfolio/writing assignments (2)
- Planner or agenda book (electronic or paper)
- iPad (keyboard optional)

## Course Objectives:

- Build a knowledge of language through the study of vocabulary, grammar and syntax
- Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of sound organization in writing
- Respond with honesty and clarity to the written communication of others
- Develop an individual style of writing adaptable to different occasions, through the exploration of ideas, writing strategies and revision
- Practice, analyze and evaluate the rhetorical features of writing

- Learn the importance of establishing a purpose for writing, recognizing one's audience, and inserting one's own voice into the writing task.

### **Daily Expectations and Procedures:**

- If you miss class, you are responsible for making up assignments. It is your responsibility to determine what has been missed. **(Students are allowed two school days TOTAL to make up the work.) If a student is absent the day a paper is due, an electronic submission is still expected.**
- If you are absent on the day of an assigned quiz, test, or writing assignment, you must be ready to take the quiz or test or turn in the paper on the day you return to class. You will have TWO days to complete make-up work, except in extenuating circumstances.
- If you are absent from school for part of a day in which a major paper is due, you must get that paper to the teacher (even a substitute) before you leave or upon arrival at school.
- Be on time for class with your assignments done by 3:10 pm on the day the assignment is due, unless otherwise stated. ROUGH DRAFTS ARE THE EXCEPTION. Since we will regularly work with your rough draft material during class time, your rough drafts are DUE IN CLASS; done but not printed will be a loss of points.
- I am in school at 7:30 every morning and after school until 3:30 (sometimes later). However, I may have meetings, so unless you make arrangements to meet me, do not assume I will always be available. Please check our class google calendar for my office hours.
- Only water is allowed in class. School rule.

### **Evaluation:**

- I will accept NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS!!! Because you will be doing many writing assignments, it is important for you to keep up with assignments daily, and just as important, turning in quality work. ALL FINAL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE TYPED.
- Grades are weighted by categories in Infinite Campus:
  - 10% daily work
  - 25% vocabulary and grammar
  - 65% compositions
- Evaluation will be based on the following percentage breakdown:
 

94-100% = A	90-93% = A-	87-89% = B+	84-86% = B
80-83% = B-	77-79% = C+	74-76% = C	70-73% = C-
67-69% = D+	64-66% = D	60-63% = D-	0-59% = F

\*\*\*Work hard and good luck!!!\*\*\*

**General Grading Guide; each assignment will have specific expectations.**

*This general criteria lays out the elements and levels of performance for paper writing. Grading writing is a holistic exercise; a paper is always evaluated as a sum of all the elements.*

**A—** Thesis is strong, specific, supportable, and limited. Paragraphs regularly point back to the thesis statement, emphasizing a clear, well-defined topic. Appropriate use of evidence strengthens the overall paper. Relevant, telling, quality details give the reader important information that goes beyond the obvious or predictable. Required textual support is met per specific assignment details. Quotes and/or paraphrases are relevant, embedded within sentences fluidly, and used effectively. Writer's discussion and analysis explores the ideas of the thesis and supporting details with thoughtfulness, depth, and originality. Effective topic sentences and transitions create a cohesive flow throughout discussion of the essay topics. Essay is free of most grammar errors, and there are no spelling mistakes. Writer makes no errors in the format or MLA citation of sources. Conclusion effectively reiterates thesis points without redundancy, and succinctly wraps up all arguments.

**B—** Thesis statement needs polishing to address a weakness in one of the key criteria of a successful thesis: strong, specific, supportable, and limited. Most paragraphs point back to the thesis statement, creating a main idea, but paper may contain unsupported generalizations. Most of the evidence supports the thesis, but a few details are unrelated or unclear. Topic sentences help to focus discussion and connect to thesis, but the discussion needs further cohesion. Most transitions are present and attempt to connect ideas between paragraphs. Most supporting details are relevant, but one key issue or portion of the thesis is unsupported. Required textual support is met per specific assignment details. Quotes or paraphrases are present with a recognizable attempt to embed fluidly. Writer addresses most of the topic ideas, but needs to strengthen arguments with further textual support and/or analysis. There are some misspelled words and a few grammar errors, but they do not distract the reader from the message. Writer makes a few errors in the format or MLA citation of sources. Conclusion effectively reiterates thesis points and summarizes discussion.

**C—** Thesis statement is awkward or unclear and needs more revision and clarity. Some paragraphs point back to the thesis statement, creating a vague main idea with a need for more focus. Topic sentences are unclear and transitions are missing and/or ineffective. Some supporting details and information are given, but several key issues or portions of the argument are unsupported, unclear, and/or off-topic. Fewer than required direct and relevant quotes or paraphrases are utilized; textual support is not adequately incorporated. A lack of relevant discussion raises more questions than answers. Too much plot summary or generalities detract from the essay. Spelling mistakes and grammar errors distract the reader from the content.

Writer makes several errors in the format or MLA citation of sources. An attempt is made to conclude the essay but does not adequately wrap up the discussion and provide closure.

**D—** The thesis statement is unclear and confusing. Few to none of the paragraphs point back to the thesis statement. There is a seemingly random collection of ideas. Topic sentences are unclear or missing, and transitions are completely lacking. Supporting details and information are typically unclear or not related to the topic. No textual support (quotations and/or paraphrases) is present and/or relevant to discussion. Writer spends little to no time on relevant discussion. Spelling mistakes and grammar errors are a major distraction and point to sloppy editing. Writer makes significant errors in the format or MLA citation of sources. Conclusion does not reconnect to any previous ideas, summarize, or provide closure.

**F—** This paper does not meet the length requirement. Paper is disorganized, disjointed, and there is no recognizable sequence or order of ideas. Paper does not include any quotes, paraphrases, or textual support of any kind. Grammar, spelling, and/or mechanics impede presentation of ideas.

**Zero—** Paper is plagiarized. Per school policy, discipline referral to office for consequences to be determined.

***Tentative Schedule...assignments and time subject to change.***

**\*There are NO SNOW days in Comp. You are expected to check your email/Moodle for assignments; do not assume due dates will change for canceled school. Tentative Schedule:**

- Week 1:** college application/scholarship
- Week 2:** Finish up College App/Scholarship, begin Compare/Contrast
- Week 3:** compare/contrast paper
- Week 4:** Finish Compare/Contrast; creative fiction writing
- Week 5-8:** Stylistic paper
- Week 9:** Movie Review
- Week 10:** review and final

**Reminders:** Weekly vocabulary lists are available on Moodle, and tests are on Fridays. Intense grammar work throughout.

.

**Plagiarism and Cheating:**

Any acts plagiarism or cheating will result in a zero grade for that assignment. I will contact your parents and the office to inform them of the situation. The office will handle any disciplinary consequences of the situation. Please see the student handbook for the school policy and consequences of plagiarism. At this point, you have had instruction on how to avoid plagiarism in at least four of your English courses at the high school, so there should be no questions as to what it entails. Citation questions, however, may arise, so we will review the definition of plagiarism and the overview of MLA format. I will also instruct you where to find online citation help for your papers and projects.

Please note--EasyBib should be avoided as it will not give you reliable citations for certain sources (internet especially), nor is it up to date on the latest rules for MLA format (the MLA made changes just this past summer!)... and yes, I checked.

**iPad/PLD acceptable use in class:**

You will be using your iPads regularly in this course. With the introduction of iPads, Personal Learning Devices (PLD) may NOT be used in this course (laptops, iphones, itouch, smartphones, netbooks etc.) without express permission. Acceptable use includes work related to course material (research, solutions, course videos, poll taking etc.). Inappropriate use (texting, using facebook, surfing non-related classroom material etc.) will be reported to the office as a violation of PLD policy. All course handouts will be made available in Moodle in electronic form ONLY. I require all papers be completed in Google Docs shared with me for ease of access in all locations and all devices. iPads may not be out during exams; students must turn them off and place them face-down under the desk. Inappropriate use of your iPad will be considered a violation of school policy; consequences will be determined based on offense.

Dear parents/guardians:

Please review the information stated in the College Prep Advanced Composition syllabus, and if you have any questions or concerns, feel free to email me at [justin.jourdan@byron.k12.mn.us](mailto:justin.jourdan@byron.k12.mn.us). I will be more than happy to answer any questions you might have. If you have no questions at this time, I would ask that both you and your child sign below and return this document to me so that I have a record of it. Thank you.

I/We have read and understand the course description and policies concerning homework, attendance, the use of iPads/PLD's, and Plagiarism. I/We agree to it in its entirety.

Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

(Parents, please note my contact information and feel free to contact me when necessary)